



## MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

*Maryland's Social Services Agency*



### MEDIA RELEASE

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## **WESTERN MARYLAND COUNTIES CELEBRATE SOCIAL WORK MONTH BY NAMING SOCIAL WORKERS OF THE YEAR**

*Allegany, Frederick, Garrett and Washington Counties  
Applaud Child Welfare and Adult Services Workers*

**BALTIMORE** – March is National Social Work Appreciation Month and local departments of social services in each jurisdiction are honoring workers who represent the best in the profession.

The **Allegany County Department of Social Services** is honoring Adult Services worker **Susan Bambacus**

**Frederick County Department of Social Services** identified a 23-year veteran, **Walter Morrow**, Treatment Foster Care worker to honor.

**Garrett County Department of Social Services** selected **Matt Everline** a treatment foster care worker.

Adult Services worker **Kay Higgins** from **Washington County Department of Social Services** is their honoree.

Social workers and caseworkers perform a wide range of essential tasks including determining the safety of children, identifying new foster parents, helping facilitate adoption services and ensuring the well being of elderly residents who live independently. They touch the lives of thousands of vulnerable children and adults in Maryland and across the country.

“Our social workers are dedicated professionals that strive daily to make a positive difference in the lives of others,” said Department of Human Resources Secretary Brenda Donald. “Now, more than ever, they are the vital link between Maryland’s most vulnerable population and an array of support services that this population needs.” Last year, over 600,000 Marylanders received one or more of the services provided by the Department of Human Resources and its 24 local Departments of Social Services across the state.

Each of the Western Maryland counties, (Allegany, Frederick, Garrett and Washington) have selected a worker of the year that best represents the “*purpose and possibilities*” in social work – this year’s national social work appreciation month theme. Supervisors, co-workers and peers selected from workers that exhibit the best qualities of the profession.

**Susan Bambacus** has a vast knowledge of Adult Service programs both at the state and Allegany County levels. She is frequently the first point of contact for people who call to make an Adult Service referral or to explore resources for adults. She is empathetic and knowledgeable about the resources available. She does not seek praise and often avoids efforts to call attention to her work. She is truly a selfless leader and a social worker who strives everyday to help improve the lives of her customers and her staff.

**Walter Morrow** has been providing services to families for over 23 years. He has worked in three local departments of social services providing adult protective services and family preservation services. He currently serves as the coordinator for Family Involvement Meetings. The positive impact that Family Involvement Meetings have had thus far in Frederick County is largely due to Mr. Morrow's dedication to training local staff, community stake-holders and facilitating these meetings.

**Matt Everline** works with the Garrett County DSS as the Treatment Foster Care Worker. His commitment to the children and families in Garrett County shines through and he inspires others to be diligent in their work. In addition to providing excellent customer services, Matt is well known as the "agency prankster" bringing humor and laughter to all his co-workers. He understands the importance of laughter and works hard to bring happiness to those around him.

**Kay Higgins** has been an ideal model for other social workers at Washington County DSS for twenty years. She has consistently provided excellent case management services to her elderly and disabled clients. She frequently goes beyond the job requirements to provide the highest quality of services to her clients. Kay always has the needs of her clients as her top priority

Each of the honorees has been invited to attend an appreciation luncheon to be held on Monday, March 30, 2009. Lt. Governor Anthony Brown will bring remarks at the event.

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The Maryland Department of Human Resources is the state's social service provider. The agency collaborates with 24 local jurisdictions to: provide foster care, adoption and protective services to children; collect and distribute child support payments; and provide temporary cash, food stamps and medical assistance to families. It also administers programs for homeless persons, refugees, migrant workers, victims of crime and women who are displaced, battered or assaulted. Last year, DHR served 638,000 people in need. In terms of its annual budget, DHR is Maryland's fourth largest state agency.